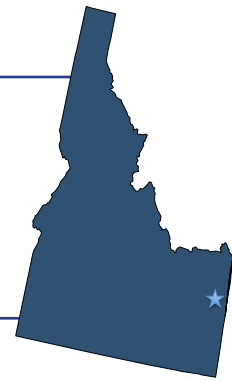

BONNEVILLE COUNTY, IDAHO

MENTAL HEALTH COURT

Approximately 45 participants per year
Established in 2002



NOTABLE FEATURES

- A rural program that has strong support from the state and uses an assertive community treatment (ACT) model for all participants
- Focuses exclusively on high-risk, high-needs people
- Makes use of local resources and works with community partners to identify programmatic support, housing options, and unique prosocial activities for participants
- Offers mentoring services to prepare participants who are near completing the program to become peer support specialists or recovery coaches—both potential employment options after graduation from the program

MENTAL HEALTH COURT TEAM

The Bonneville County MHC is a multidisciplinary team that is led by a judge and includes a court coordinator, a prosecutor, a public defender, probation officers, behavioral health treatment providers, a law enforcement officer, a vocational rehabilitation assistant, a National Alliance on Mental Illness member, and housing providers in the community. All team members receive regular cross-disciplinary training and specialized training in the evidence-based practices used in the program.

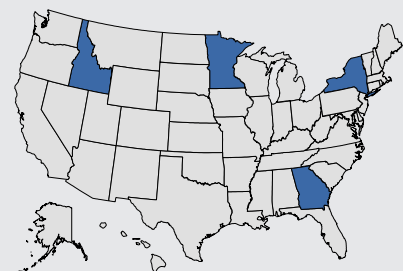
MENTAL HEALTH COURT LEARNING SITES

A mental health court (MHC) is a court-based program that brings together members of criminal justice and behavioral health systems, among others, to work with people with mental illnesses who face criminal charges. MHCs modify traditional court processes to start participants on a therapeutically oriented path of court supervision and behavioral health treatment.

MHC teams generally hold meetings prior to each court convening, with participant referrals coming from district attorneys, defense attorneys, judges, community supervision, other court partners and jail staff, as well as family or community members.

The number of MHCs in the U.S. has grown exponentially in the past two decades. State and local officials who have recently launched, or are considering whether to launch, such programs in their jurisdictions often seek out more experienced MHCs for guidance and advice.

To facilitate peer-to-peer assistance among jurisdictions that have established or are planning to establish MHCs, the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA), through its technical assistance provider, The Council of State Governments Justice Center, has designated four jurisdictions as MHC “learning sites.” Located across the country, these MHC Learning Sites represent a diverse cross-section of perspectives and program examples. MHC Learning Sites host in-person visits to their courts and respond to telephone and email inquiries from the field.



WHOM DOES THIS MENTAL HEALTH COURT SERVE?

The Bonneville County MHC targets people who have been charged with felony and misdemeanor offenses and who have been observed as being at a medium to high risk of reoffending, have severe and persistent mental illness, and have significant functional impairment in multiple life areas. Eligible candidates are generally in the post-conviction stage and have co-occurring substance use disorders. People with developmental disabilities are not eligible for the MHC, and applicants with sex offenses are considered on a case-by-case basis.

HOW DOES THIS MENTAL HEALTH COURT WORK?

This MHC seeks to tailor treatment plans for participants based on their individual needs and goals, and help them to develop the skills they need to succeed after completing the program. The program has four phases:

- **Phase 1, Engagement and Orientation:** Participants focus on becoming engaged in the program, maintaining participation, and being accountable.
- **Phase 2, Intensive Treatment Phase:** Participants receive intensive individualized treatment based on their specific needs, which are identified through risk and needs assessment.
- **Phase 3, Transition and Community Engagement:** MHC staff work with participants to determine what level of care they will need after completion of the MHC program and to develop a plan for post-MHC care.
- **Phase 4, (A) Maintenance:** While working with program staff to solidify their post-MHC continued care plans and connect with providers in the community, participants exercise the skills they have gained in earlier phases of the program; **(B) Continued Care:** Participants begin their continued care plans to determine whether any adjustments are needed to achieve long-term success and settle into the routines they will follow after completion of the MHC program.

Participants must be involved in the MHC for at least one year, while the average length of participation for those who complete all four phases is 18 months. Court hearings are held weekly, as are pre-court staff meetings and meetings of MHC clinical staff.

FUNDING AND SUSTAINABILITY

The Idaho legislature funds activities of the court. Mental health treatment is funded through the Division of Behavioral Health in the Department of Health and Welfare, and through Medicaid for those who are eligible. State and county funds provide for probation supervision and the service of the prosecutor and public defender. Vocational rehabilitation and peer support specialists are funded by the state. The MHC holds regular stakeholder meetings with state legislators and other system leaders to help ensure sustainability.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

The Mental Health Court Learning Sites are a part of the technical assistance offered by BJA's Justice and Mental Health Collaboration Program. Information about Mental Health Court Learning Sites can be found at csgjusticecenter.org/mental-health/learning-sites. To download the following other mental health court resources, please visit csgjusticecenter.org/mental-health-court-project:

A Guide to Collecting Mental Health Court Outcome Data
Mental Health Courts: A Guide to Research-Informed Policy and Practice
State Standards: Building Better Mental Health Courts
Improving Responses to People with Mental Illnesses: The Essential Elements of a Mental Health Court

Improving Responses to People with Mental Illnesses at the Pretrial Stage: Essential Elements
Developing a Mental Health Court: An Interdisciplinary Curriculum
Developing a Mental Health Court: An Interdisciplinary Curriculum; Handbook for Facilitators

HOW TO LEARN FROM THIS SITE

The Bonneville County MHC hosts site visits and answers questions about its operation and best practices via phone and email.

To learn more, contact:

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